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ABSTRACT

The New York State Rural Education Advisory Committee conducted an intergenerational project in which rural schools and agencies/facilities serving older persons were brought together to help young children build the reading skills necessary for academic success. Intergenerational programs such as this can help schools reach higher standards while providing meaningful volunteer activities for older persons. This manual aims to assist other schools in creating similar programs. Chapters explain what intergenerational programs are; the importance of focusing on young children and reading; how senior volunteers help support reading in the classroom; other ways intergenerational programs can help students; what teachers can expect from senior volunteers; what senior volunteers can expect from a school and in a classroom; how schools can begin one of these programs; the importance of training and orientation activities; how the program can grow and develop; the resources needed; special issues that may arise; and where to get more information. Appendices present profiles of 23 promising rural programs with contact information, program materials, orientation materials, and 20 selected resources. (TD)

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Welcome to

Generations Together:
Reading for the Future

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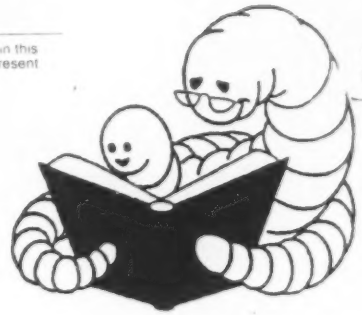

An Intergenerational Program for Schools

Brought to you by
The Rural Education Advisory Committee

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October 1999

Dear Colleagues:

Every child deserves the opportunity to learn to read and to achieve at high levels. Across the nation, senior volunteers are joining together with young children to encourage them to read, write, speak and listen. These are the skills that help children prepare for success in school. Children and older persons both benefit when generations join together in a school setting to focus on student achievement. Intergenerational programs can help school districts increase the resources available to young children as they help children reach higher standards.

Every educator, parent and child knows that reading is the most important skill taught in elementary school. Without reading skills, children will not succeed in school. The NYS Rural Education Advisory Committee has worked with rural school districts and local agencies serving older persons to pilot intergenerational programs to support young children to build the reading skills necessary for academic success. As a result of this initiative, this manual was developed to encourage schools in New York State to join in intergenerational partnerships to support young children in improving their reading skills.

The NYS Rural Education Advisory Committee was established in 1990 as a result of legislation sponsored by the NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. The Committee is a strong supporter of collaborative programs to help children in rural schools achieve higher standards. The Committee provides funding and support for initiatives related to the education of rural students. The results have produced innovative collaborative efforts designed to reach higher standards and to improve educational programs throughout New York State. The Generations Together: Reading for the Future project is an example of how collaboration can enrich the educational experience.

The Rural Education Advisory Committee would like to especially thank the mentor programs that helped shape this initiative and the emerging programs formed as a result of new partnerships in this pilot endeavor. We invite you to become part of our efforts to help children succeed in school through intergenerational partnerships.

Sincerely,

Charles H. Bohlen

CHB/pl

Charles H. Bohlen, Jr., Chair
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I thought that he would
only help me learn to read.
Then I learned that I had a
new friend. We both like
baseball and cars.
We can talk to each other
about anything.
Tuesdays are
special days at school.

A Student

Foreword from the New York State Office for the Aging

October 1999

Dear Members of the Rural Education Advisory Committee:

I want to commend the Rural Education Advisory Committee for funding the pilot project, **Generations Together: Reading for the Future**. Your committee has recognized the role older adults can play in assisting young students to become emerging readers. Intergenerational programs such as this can provide a meaningful and powerful impact on the lives of older persons and the children they serve. Intergenerational partnerships can help schools reach higher standards while at the same time, provide meaningful volunteer activities for older persons.

Under the leadership of Governor George Pataki, the New York State Office for the Aging and its network has been successful in encouraging older individuals to provide valuable support to their communities through volunteer service. We continue to look for opportunities to use the vast talents and energies of the fastest growing, best-educated and most active group of mature citizens in our nation's history.

Both students and older persons benefit when they join together in a learning experience. Senior volunteers can participate in the full range of learning activities, and truly become part of the teaching and learning environment in the schools. Students can become enthusiastic learners through meaningful relationships with elders.

We are proud to be a participant in this initiative, and look forward to the emergence of intergenerational programs in the schools.

Sincerely yours,

Walter G. Hoefer, Director
New York State Office for the Aging

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Generations Together: Reading for the Future

Introduction

Children everywhere love to read. Yet not all children have an opportunity to read their very best. Extensive research indicates that many students struggle in school because they have not yet mastered essential and basic reading skills. Numerous studies have shown that students who fail to read well by fourth grade often have a greater likelihood of dropping out of school, and face a lifetime of diminished success. Across America, communities are pulling together to strengthen education and meet higher standards. Supporting children as they learn to read is critical in creating a foundation for success.

Across New York State, educators and the school community have worked together to create higher learning standards. New York State has long recognized the importance of reading. New comprehensive English Language Arts Assessments for both 4th and 8th grade assess reading comprehension and a student's ability to apply the knowledge and skills that have been learned. These new assessments culminate years of sustained professional efforts among teachers, school administrators, education and teaching specialists, and policy makers to link teaching and learning to higher expectations for student achievement.

Recently, New York State schools have received the results of the 4th Grade English Language Arts Assessment. Initial results indicate that fifty-two percent of the children in fourth grade were not reading at levels necessary to achieve State standards. Many schools are working to increase reading skills in young children, and are developing or strengthening a variety of strategies to meet this need. The assessment results can identify, both for individual students and for the school, where student skills can be strengthened. Across the nation, numerous schools are seeking volunteers to join together with teachers and young children in school settings to encourage students to read, write, speak, and listen. These are the skills that help children prepare for school success and relate directly to the learning standards developed for English Language Arts.

In response to the recognition of the critical link of strong reading skills to success in school, the Rural Education Advisory Committee (REAC) has engaged in an intergenerational project to bring together rural schools and agencies/facilities serving older persons, and has developed this manual to assist other schools in creating programs. Partnerships involving intergenerational connections have been supporting schools across America in building a strong future for children. Intergenerational programs can bring the rich experience of the past to future generations. Program models can vary from setting to setting, depending on the needs of the school and the ages and interests of potential senior volunteers. Using an intergenerational approach, the REAC has engaged rural schools in a pilot project designed to promote effective early reading skills for all students. The lessons learned from these pilots can be used in any school setting: rural, urban, or suburban.

Older volunteers of any age and residing in a variety of settings can bring a lifetime of experience and a strong commitment to their roles in the school. Key premises that support the linkages between young children learning to read and older persons include:

- **Most reading difficulties can be prevented**. In addition to high quality reading instruction in schools, independent reading by students can help many children increase language and reading skills and achievement. Senior volunteers can play an important role in helping children by serving as reading coaches and mentors. The National Research Council, in its report released March 18, 1998, indicates that "the majority of reading problems faced by today's adolescents and adults could have been avoided or resolved in the early years of childhood." (Preventing Reading Difficulties in Children).

- **American society is undergoing continuous change as we near the 21st Century**. A key area of change has been an increase in life expectancy as a result of improved medical care. Changes in employment patterns have resulted in many individuals retiring at earlier ages than before, increasing the availability of older persons seeking volunteer experiences. Older adults are a growing resource that can help schools and children achieve educational success. For example, the New York State Education Department estimates that nearly half of the current teaching force will retire over the next five to ten years. The 1990 Census indicates that more than one out of six persons in New York State are 60 years of age or older. Older persons now account for 18 percent of the State's population.

- **Changing demographics in our nation have served to lessen contact of young children with older adults.** Increased mobility, a substantial rise in single-parent families, and other outside influences such as television or the Internet have tended to reduce contact of children with their extended families. An increasing lack of contact between young children and older adults often results in each generation seeing itself as a separate community rather than an integral part of one larger community. The Secretary of State in Illinois, which supports a comprehensive intergenerational program, indicated, "Today's complicated and demanding lifestyles have created a society in need of more cooperative co-existence among generations. Through involvement in intergenerational programs in both the public and private sectors, people young and old can thrive."

The Generations Together: Reading for the Future project has been designed to demonstrate the benefits of linking senior volunteers with schools to help improve reading performance of young children. Beginning in the fall of 1999, participating school districts have strengthened or initiated intergenerational programs in school settings. The purpose of this manual is to share what these sites have learned in the planning phase, and to encourage other schools to create their own intergenerational initiatives. The format for this manual is a question and answer format, to assist both schools and agencies/facilities serving older persons in initiating their own designs.

What Are intergenerational programs?

Intergenerational programs are designed to bring together the skills, talents, and enthusiasm of individuals from different generations so that each generation can benefit and grow from the skills and talents of the other. Intergenerational programs work best when they spring from real needs, and when the program is designed so that each participant believes that they are not only giving, but also gaining from the experience. Such programs succeed when they are integrated into the day to day fabric of the school, and have broad-based support from all who participate.

In a school setting, intergenerational programs can link older persons or senior volunteers with students to share common experiences and the love of learning. The roles senior volunteers can play in a school setting are many. Older persons may participate in school experiences daily, weekly, or occasionally for special events. Volunteers may choose to work with individual students, small groups, or with whole classrooms.

Senior volunteers, including those over the age of 85, have participated in schools by making history come alive and sharing their own experiences; serving as breakfast buddies to meet and greet students; becoming students themselves as middle school students have taught them computer skills; and serving as pen pals or reading coaches for children. Within the classroom setting, senior volunteers can support learning experiences designed by teachers in all grades and subjects.

Teachers, administrators, students, and senior volunteers participating in the pilot project have shared the benefits of intergenerational programs:

For Students

- ♥ Improved academic performance
- ♥ Connections to older persons
- ♥ Understanding of aging
- ♥ Building on the resources of youth

For Senior Volunteers

- ♥ Sharing life experiences, skills and talents
- ♥ Building connections with a younger generation
- ♥ Helping others learn and feeling useful
- ♥ Promoting good health and averting depression

For Teachers

- ♥ Enriching education by added resources
- ♥ Expanding opportunities for students
- ♥ Helping individual children succeed
- ♥ Improved student behavior

For the Community

- ♥ Supportive community for education
- ♥ Service to each other as a model
- ♥ Spirit of community

Why focus on young children and reading?

Reading is a core skill, essential to success in our society and to achieving higher standards in school. The ability to read is highly valued and important for social and economic development. The National Research Council supports the promotion of reading through interaction with the greater community. The State Education Department's English Language Arts Resource Guide indicates that there are several factors that have been consistently identified in the professional literature as having a positive influence on achievement in English Language Arts and therefore can promote achievement. Under the guidance of the teacher in the classroom several of these factors can be supported through the development of an intergenerational program. These factors include:

- ♥ Extensive reading
- ♥ Interactive learning
- ♥ Extension of background knowledge
- ♥ Instruction in reading and writing strategies
- ♥ Integrated activities
- ♥ Attention to skills
- ♥ Discussion and analysis
- ♥ A range of literature

Research on language learning makes it very clear that language achievement depends upon the extent to which the learner is engaged in actual acts of reading, writing, listening, and speaking for meaningful purposes. Teachers participating in intergenerational programs indicate that senior volunteers in their classrooms can serve as coaches and reinforce reading skills in the classrooms. Volunteers work directly under the guidance of the classroom teachers. Their role is to support and provide additional resources to enhance reading activities in the classroom.

At the same time, there is growing recognition that students' performance and achievements are often based on the examples set by others, and that intergenerational programs can promote positive learning experiences for children. Older persons as role models can help students learn from their interactions as coaches and mentors, and empower students to reach higher standards through positive interaction. Students also have first-hand experience with the aging process and both generations gain a greater respect for the skills and talents of the other. Reading together develops a common bond as the learning experience is shared.

Schools involved in the pilot project have advised that an intergenerational program will have a greater chance of success in their school if there is a concentrated focus. Because the schools are so involved in the promotion of early reading skills as a critical measure of success, there is a natural linkage between the initial development of an intergenerational program and the development of strategies to reach higher standards in English Language Arts in the early grades. A few of the initial pilots beginning in the fall have already had inquiries from teachers at the high school level interested in developing programs as well. As programs get underway, the careful planning in place by teachers, administrators, and agencies serving older persons or senior housing administrators will form a strong basis for development of other programs.

How can senior volunteers help support reading in the classroom?

Schools involved in the pilot projects spent time discussing how senior volunteers may be helpful in the classroom to support reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. As part of the orientation process for several schools, teachers and seniors discussed what was important to them and what would work in particular classroom settings. Teachers described a wide variety of roles. For example, one teacher had a student who needed support in reading aloud. She was looking for a senior who could quietly practice "pre-reading" with the student to build confidence for the classroom setting. Another teacher developed a reading corner with a rocking chair. Other schools have created pen pal programs, with letters exchanged between seniors and students.

In some classrooms, students rotate reading their favorite books to the senior volunteer. Yet another was interested in "literacy kits" that could contain supplemental materials that could be used by a senior in the classroom. One program specifically assisted senior volunteers to learn more about children with learning disabilities under the direction of the classroom teacher. Senior housing alternatives are also interested in promoting reading skills. Many have developed pen pal programs with schools. Individuals, including those considered frail, can make wonderful pen pals. Following is a list of activities that were most commonly suggested on how senior volunteers can help in the classroom.

- ♥ Reading stories to a child or a small group of children.
- ♥ Listening to a child read a story. Children gain confidence when they read aloud.
- ♥ Helping children understand the stories they read. Asking questions about the story.
- ♥ Listening to stories about things in the child's life. Telling the children stories out their own life. Have fun sharing together.
- ♥ Writing stories the child tells them. Supporting children in writing their own stories.
- ♥ Encouraging children to read on their own. Reading the same stories when the senior volunteer and child are not together to share ideas in the classroom the next time they are together.

Senior volunteers involved in an intergenerational program serve as coaches and mentors and participate in the classroom under the direct supervision and guidance of the classroom teacher. The Reading Teacher, in a recent article (March 1999) stated that "...reading coaches can provide important literacy experiences for children. Reading coaches can add an important dimension to children's literacy experiences."

The activities they provide can support the teaching and learning style of the classroom teachers. Their role is to enhance the learning experience for children by reading stories, focusing on comprehension, story retelling and telling, active listening, creating opportunities to write, or motivating children to read. In general, senior volunteers will not have the educational experience necessary to serve in an actual tutoring capacity, but can support the reading process in many important ways.

Are there other ways intergenerational programs can help students?

While the Rural Education Advisory Committee has focused its attention on reading and other English Language Arts skills in the early grades, there are many ways that intergenerational programs can support learning in the school environment. Senior volunteers can participate at the school site, in classrooms or in other capacities, or in their own homes or adult residences and still feel a part of the school community. One of the programs assisting with the pilot project has created an innovative "Pages Between the Ages" program where students and older persons residing in adult facilities exchange letters on a weekly basis. Occasionally, about twice a year, the children and the older persons join for larger school events or at the adult residence. Participating programs, including agencies providing senior housing, have generated ideas that can be considered by schools.

Following are examples to stimulate thinking about creating other intergenerational opportunities.

In the Classroom

- Enrichment buddies
- Math helpers
- Special friends
- Oral and community history
- Science activities
- Artist resource program
- Music and theater support
- Poetry readers
- Special events planning and assistance
- Career mentors
- Classroom materials preparation

In School

- ♥ Field trip chaperones
- ♥ Playground pals
- ♥ Lunchtime friends
- ♥ School ambassadors and greeters
- ♥ Resource speakers
- ♥ Library helpers to promote library use
- ♥ Intergenerational health education and exercise programs
- ♥ Book fair organization
- ♥ Newsletter production
- ♥ Committee participation

At Home

- ♥ Instructional material development
- ♥ Collage design
- ♥ Board book creation
- ♥ Bulletin board themes
- ♥ Letter writing
- ♥ Postcard correspondence
- ♥ Computer sidekicks
- ♥ Telephone homework helper

What can teachers expect from senior volunteers?

Teachers can expect senior volunteers to bring a lifetime of experience to the classroom, and motivation to succeed in their new role. The skills and understanding the volunteers bring to young students will enhance the educational experience for children, bring renewed enthusiasm to the classroom, and demonstrate the commitment of the role of older persons in the school.

Senior volunteers do not have to be an expert in an academic subject in order to be a senior volunteer. Therefore their responsibility is to support the role of the teacher through working directly with the children on activities related to the child's needs. The most important quality is enjoying being with children. Senior volunteers of any age can participate.

The American Association of Retired Persons and the National Association of Partners in Education, indicated in a publication regarding intergenerational programs that "Older volunteers coming into the schools make such a difference---they bring so much life experience. What they offer the children is priceless---a lasting legacy passed on to the next generation."

The American Association of School Administrators looks for the following qualities in school volunteers. These qualities reflect the qualities that schools and

agencies serving older persons seek in recruiting senior volunteers:

- ♥ Cooperation, dependability and positive thinking
- ♥ Compatibility with children and their needs
- ♥ Confidentiality
- ♥ Flexibility, friendliness, and patience
- ♥ A sense of humor
- ♥ Responsible citizenship qualities

Most senior volunteers who work with younger children volunteer one or two days per week for one or two hours a day. Some prefer to come in more or less often. Others may be available for occasional events, such a celebration of an historical event, where they can provide valuable personal experiences. The school and the agency serving older persons or a housing facility administrator will work with each volunteer to develop a schedule, based on preferences and recommendations of the classroom teacher.

Based on the experiences of the schools and agencies participating in the pilot project, working through a needs assessment helps a beginning intergenerational program to identify how the needs of all the participants can be met. One project identified a simple format for both teachers and seniors to complete, so that compatible needs could be addressed. Another project brought teachers and seniors together in a training environment to discuss how they could work with each other.

Projects that have been in existence over a period of time also indicated that as relationships grew among the teachers and the senior volunteers, roles evolved within the classroom setting as everyone became more comfortable in working together. Many times, the presence of a senior volunteer brought new resources into the classroom as others became involved. Other issues, such as if a volunteer may be away for an extended period of time in the winter can be accommodated. For example, one volunteer who vacations in Florida keeps in touch with the children through exchanging postcards.

What can senior volunteers expect from a school?

Senior volunteers and the agencies or facilities who serve them also need to be aware of the school setting and what the school can offer as it participates in the program. Schools often ask about how they can define their responsibilities as well. In some of the pilot sites, where agencies serving older persons assisted in the recruiting process, the agencies and the schools developed simple memoranda of understanding, clarifying roles and responsibilities. Little things can also be discussed in the process of thinking through what will work for everyone.

Every school and every classroom is different. Each school and agency will want to assure that senior volunteers and the students have the best experiences possible. Most schools will ask the senior volunteer to visit before participating in a classroom and will want to know more about the volunteer's interests. Because classroom styles differ from teacher to teacher, and the needs of the senior volunteer may vary, understanding how things fit together for the best experience is critical. For example, some volunteers may prefer a quiet environment, where others may enjoy the more boisterous activities that young children engage in. During one recent training experience, the school advised the senior volunteers that it would notify them if the children were on a field trip, so that they wouldn't come to school if the children were not there. One senior volunteer asked if he could go on the field trip. As a result, the school had a new resource to accompany the children, and the volunteer had another experience to share.

Some schools will have their own procedures to check background or references. Other schools will follow a process used by local agencies serving senior volunteers. For example, one of the pilot schools has asked the local Department of Social Services to provide background checks against the Child Abuse Registry. In other schools involved in the pilot, a local agency or facility serving older persons, such as the Foster Grandparent Program, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, or a senior housing facility completed an application and an interview process prior to the volunteer becoming involved in the school. One pilot school has conducted its own recruiting from its local community, and is working with each senior volunteer individually.

Many schools will have a sign-in procedure, so that school personnel know who is in the building. Schools are encouraged to have a common sign-in place for any volunteer, so those volunteers can follow a routine and also be greeted when they enter a school building. It is important for both school personnel and the senior volunteers to feel involved.

In general, schools, in collaboration with the senior volunteer, the teacher, and any participating agency, will assign volunteers; implement any initial orientation or training; maintain a record of volunteer hours; furnish volunteers with any materials; provide for the safety of the volunteer within the school; provide supervision of the volunteer when on site; and complete any paperwork related to the request by any participating agency.

Some schools offer training, orientation, or in-service instruction for volunteers along with school staff. One school with experience in intergenerational programs involves senior volunteers in all training experiences available to teachers as part of the school philosophy. Some schools may also offer breakfast or lunch, depending on when volunteers are in the building. One school participating in the project has designed a "Breakfast Buddies" program, with senior volunteers assisting with homework in the early school hours.

A few schools may offer additional services or may work with a local agency serving senior volunteers to provide services. For example, one participating school

has a family-friendly referral center with colorful brochures and information about community services. Another school regularly informs senior volunteers about community events and services, such as immunization clinics or special school events. Some schools may also have transportation runs that coincide with volunteer hours to assist in the transportation process.

What can senior volunteers expect in the classroom?

Both senior volunteers and agencies serving senior volunteers are interested in what activities will take place in the classroom. Because each senior and each classroom is so different, planning usually takes place on an individual basis. In general, senior volunteers and the teacher will plan activities and assignments. Planning for involvement will be based on the volunteer's interests and the needs of the class. The teacher will also help set guidelines for working in the classroom. It is important to remember that the teacher has responsibility for all activities in the classroom and for the educational program for each child. For example, in classrooms with young children, there are often designated areas for activities to take place. There may also be times when children work independently or in small groups. Each of these considerations may help frame the time of day, the duration, and the type of activity agreed-upon.

Volunteers can count on the teacher to have assignments ready. Volunteers may also have ideas about activities that they would like to try. Volunteers and teachers report that as the volunteer becomes more comfortable in the classroom and the teacher has more experience in working with a particular volunteer that planning together becomes more natural. One of the pilot schools has developed a simple journal for the classroom. The teacher may leave notes for the volunteer in the journal about how the child is doing or anything particular to watch out for in working with a child. The senior volunteer can leave a brief message about how well things went, if the teacher is unavailable for a short chat.

Senior volunteers need to be aware that the teacher and the children will depend on the volunteer to participate regularly and to be on time. Sometimes the teacher's plan for the day is based on the presence of the volunteers. It becomes critical for the senior volunteer and the teacher to develop a way for the volunteer to notify the school if they will be late or unable to be at school on any day.

The rhythm of the children's learning style is also a factor. Young children work best in blocks of twenty to thirty minutes. Senior volunteers typically remain in a classroom for one or two hours, and may have an opportunity to work with more than one child, or with a small group. Sometimes there will be special events. For example, the children in one school were preparing materials regarding World War II. Several volunteers were able to bring memorabilia from their own experiences and share them with the children. The possibilities are endless once relationships are established.

The teacher will also want a senior volunteer to be aware of any school rules. For example, because children may consider the volunteer a special friend, they may share information that the volunteer thinks someone else should know. The teacher will provide information about how the volunteer should share that information with the school. The teacher will also appreciate that senior volunteers are guests in the classroom and will not share personal information about children with others outside of the school. This will help build trust.

How can schools begin?

Schools can use many approaches to seek partners for an intergenerational program. Every county has access to a county aging office which can help direct schools to available partners. Within the pilot project, schools sought assistance from several potential partners. In some counties, the aging office played a pivotal role in making connections or linking services. In several counties, RSVP became the lead partner agency. In at least one county, the Foster Grandparent Program participated in providing volunteers. In two other counties, senior housing facilities became partners in developing pen pal programs and providing speakers for historical events and developing community history. In one school, the P.T.A. and the community came forward in recruiting older volunteers. Some school districts also called upon retired teachers to participate. Explore options, and select the partner that will work best for your school.

Consider the broad range of possibilities. Regardless of age, older persons can play an important role in the school. Younger senior volunteers provide a wide range of skills and talents, while at the same time, older senior volunteers over the age of 85 can play a vibrant role. In one mentor site, three seniors over the age of ninety residing in residential facilities discussed their roles in the schools with potential interested schools and senior housing facilities. The possibilities for linkages are tremendous, once a school begins to explore the options in its own communities.

Once a partner is identified, guidebooks sharing stories of success in creating intergenerational partnerships in school settings agree that three critical elements are essential in beginning any program. These elements include: creating awareness, developing readiness and starting small.

Creating awareness gives everyone involved an opportunity to gain support and interest both within the school and in the community. For many teachers, sharing the classroom environment with volunteers is a new experience, and many teachers themselves have indicated a need to know more about the roles and skills that senior volunteers can bring to the classroom. On the other hand, many senior volunteers have not been in a school setting in a very long time, and have only their own memories to rely on. Teaching methods today are varied, and today's students, while sharing common bonds with students of yesterday, bring to the classroom real-life experiences that are unique to

this generation. In general, intergenerational programs are new to many schools and communities, and creating awareness takes time and energy at the beginning.

Within a school setting, awareness is usually developed and nourished at the superintendent or principal level. In some schools participating in the pilot project, the superintendent took leadership responsibility in presenting the concepts to principals, evaluating interest, and guiding the preliminary process. In other instances, the school superintendent relied on interested principals to introduce the concept at the school building level, and direct the process within the school building. In every case, the administrator had the opportunity to interact initially in small planning meetings with agencies serving older persons, and have their own questions answered first.

Once interest in the concept was generated at the administrative level, teachers were invited to participate and determine whether there was interest on their part. As with any effective program, beginning with both interested teachers and senior volunteers helps the program to begin on common ground. In every program site, interested teachers on a volunteer basis formed the core group of individuals engaged in building the program elements. The administrators and teachers worked together with teacher and parent organizations, school support staff, school board members, and students to initiate awareness.

Creating awareness also means bringing people together to share common interests in the intergenerational programs. Those schools which brought together teachers and senior volunteers to learn from each other and build initial common interest found that beginning the program became a common task, and provided the framework for success.

Developing readiness involves both the school and the community. For example, issues may arise that may not have been discussed. In one small school, the intergenerational program was the first volunteer program developed in the school. For this school, policies regarding volunteer participation in the school needed discussion and clarification. In each school, the purpose and design of the program should be discussed and developed before volunteers are recruited and selected. A needs assessment, providing information about the needs of the students, the classroom teacher, and the senior volunteers, can help in preparing all participants in understanding their roles and responsibilities. From a planning perspective, understanding each participant's expectations and roles will help program design and development.

Timing is everything in developing readiness. School calendars have an influence on successful program implementation. Programs that are initiated in the first semester or early in the second semester have an opportunity to grow and develop during the natural flow of the school year. Orientation and placement should only occur when everyone is ready to move forward. If placements are not yet available, premature training can result in loss of interest and volunteers. Planning ahead gives everyone an opportunity to begin the program ready-to-go.

Each of the schools involved in the pilot project recommended that new intergenerational programs begin small. Programs that have been initiated began with one volunteer in each classroom. Pen pal programs began in one classroom. Now that initial questions have been answered, teachers are requesting additional senior volunteers. Senior volunteers are also promoting the intergenerational program through friends and senior organizations. Everyone has benefited by moving at a pace that allowed the program to become established on a reasonable schedule.

Are training and orientation activities important?

Both teachers and senior volunteers participating in the pilot project indicated that orientation or training is critical in establishing relationships, learning about each other, and orienting each to the skills, talents, and needs of others. Initial sessions can also serve as an opportunity to ask questions, and meet each other prior to beginning the program. Each school provided orientation or training in different ways. One school held informal sessions with teachers and senior volunteers in the school setting to bring people together, provide an orientation to the program, and to initiate discussion. Another provided for half-day training with a portion devoted to senior volunteers, a portion devoted to teachers, and a portion bringing both groups together. Two districts, with the assistance of the BOCES, provided for a full day of training for everyone as a staff development day, including a refresher on reading strategies for both teachers and seniors.

An orientation session can prepare senior volunteers to:

- ♥ understand their personal views about children today, as well as their needs
- ♥ build a trusting relationship with children
- ♥ communicate and respond effectively to children at a developmental level that is appropriate for the child's age
- ♥ identify potential "trouble spots" with children and how to talk to a child about them
- ♥ communicate the child's progress as well as any concerns to the teacher

An orientation session can prepare teachers to:

- ♥ understand their personal view about aging
- ♥ engage seniors in meaningful activities in the classroom
- ♥ provide an inviting environment for volunteers in the classroom
- ♥ communicate with senior volunteers regarding assignments and roles
- ♥ ensure that the senior volunteer experience benefits the children in the classroom

How can the program grow and develop?

Schools and agencies serving older persons report that there are five critical elements that maintain programs once they begin: clear roles and responsibilities; on-

going communication; ensuring that the program design benefits everyone involved; ongoing retention and recruitment strategies; and celebrating success.

Several of the schools and agencies/facilities serving older persons that have participated in the pilot project have discussed clear roles and responsibilities. Some schools working directly with agencies/facilities serving older persons have developed Memoranda of Understandings with those agencies. A sample is included in the appendices. Other schools, such as those working with senior housing facilities, have more informal relationships. For both the volunteer and the teacher, regardless of the formality, understanding each other's roles is critical. For example, the teacher has overall responsibility for all activities that take place in the classroom. The senior volunteer participates under the direction of the teacher. Each shares responsibilities to ensure successful teamwork in the classroom.

Ongoing communication and ensuring that the program design benefits everyone involved are critical to the success of any partnership. One program in the pilot project has developed a journal notebook so that the senior volunteer and teacher can communicate thoughts and notes to each other to keep communication moving. Other programs have discussed setting aside specific times that will work best for the senior and the teacher. In schools that include more than one senior and are working with an agency serving older persons, the agency/facility usually makes arrangements for the seniors to get together to discuss common experiences. Teachers will also have that opportunity to meet together in staff meetings. Administrators, through the Memorandum of Understanding or ongoing conversations can work together to encourage success.

Retention of volunteers and teachers in the program depends most often in assuring that the experience is working for everyone. The needs of the classroom teacher, the feelings of the children toward the experience, the learning that takes place, and the satisfaction level of the senior all contribute to the retention of the senior. One senior reflected that she did not remain with the program because she did not feel useful in the classroom. When the situation was reviewed, that particular teacher had not prepared for the senior's participation with specific students. Small incidents going unnoticed can result in the loss of valuable volunteer time. Participation can be restored if situations are discussed and remedied early on. The initial phase of the program is a learning process for all.

Recruitment of volunteers is an ongoing process, especially in rural areas where transportation or other factors need to be considered. Several schools recruited through school newsletters, flyers on Grandparent's Day, announcements at PTA meetings, notices to retired school personnel, and recruitment through agencies serving older persons in the community.

Celebrating success is a significant factor in maintaining ongoing volunteer programs for any volunteers. The children involved especially enjoy sharing special times with the senior volunteers. One of the programs assisting in the develop-

ment of this project held a "pen pal picnic" at the end of its program year. Another held a luncheon, with award certificates for each volunteer. Each program has developed its own special way to celebrate success and recognize the efforts of the volunteers, the teachers, and children who participated. One program provided each student with a book and an educational placemat to remember the volunteers over the summer. Everyone benefits when success is celebrated. In addition, all programs recommend periodic evaluation by all participants to ensure that the program is meeting its goals and objectives. Celebrating success and directing energies towards improving the program will help develop long-term relationships. Regularly scheduled reviews of the program will help to ensure that the program meets its intended purpose.

To provide additional assistance in initiating and maintaining programs, several key documents have been helpful in the formulation of this pilot project as well as in the compilation of this manual. Each of those documents is listed for the reader's convenience.

What resources will I need?

School-based intergenerational programs reflect the operational costs of any effective volunteer programs. Program budgets are essential to keep the program operating smoothly. However, many schools and agencies working together have discovered that the costs of operating intergenerational programs within a school setting can be minimized by making effective use of existing resources. For example, several schools now include senior volunteers in their regular staff development programs. Others use existing books and resources in the classroom to build literacy kits for students. Still others rely on voluntary contributions from business and community-based agencies to sponsor recognition events. Existing breakfast or lunch programs can be expanded to provide meals for volunteers. Senior housing facilities often provide transportation for their residents. Some items to consider include:

- ♥ personnel
- ♥ transportation and travel
- ♥ telephone
- ♥ recognition activities (coffees, picnics, luncheons)
- ♥ publicity (brochures, posters, newsletters)
- ♥ postage
- ♥ office space
- ♥ program materials

What special issues may arise?

Senior volunteers enrich the lives of the schools. Intergenerational projects have enormous potential for sharing the learning experience. When programs work well, everybody wins. Schools, BOCES, and agencies/facilities serving older persons that

have participated in the pilot projects have discussed and responded to several issues that may arise. The experience of these schools, as well as other projects, can help interested schools and agencies in planning their own programs. The following are recommendations from schools and agencies serving older persons that can be helpful to others if these issues arise.

- ***What if the senior volunteer is not the right person for a classroom?*** Every classroom is different, each teacher has their own teaching and learning style, and every senior volunteer has their own expectations for a school experience. Teachers and senior volunteers have indicated that intergenerational programs work best when both the teacher and the senior volunteer agree on the most suitable role for the older volunteer in the classroom. Experience indicates that roles will evolve as people get to know each other. Occasionally a match may not be the correct one for any number of reasons. If that occurs, usually a reassignment to another classroom or another task may be helpful. For example, one senior volunteer returned from surgery, and the active kindergarten class just wasn't the best place to be. Working with fourth graders on a one-to-one basis worked out for everyone, and a committed volunteer's continuation in the school was accommodated.

- ***What if the senior volunteer is not the right volunteer for a school?*** The majority of senior volunteers who apply for school settings will be vibrant caring adults who want to be involved in the schools. Often, they become the best advocates for school programs. If there is a concern about a particular applicant, the interview process often helps in assuring that the senior volunteer is right for the placement, and that the placement is right for the senior volunteer. Interview questions can include questions about experience, special interests, reasons for volunteering, concerns about volunteering, and other questions that can help everyone make the right decision. Agencies that serve older persons may also have standard interview questions that help assess the person's potential as a volunteer, and some schools already have volunteer policies in place. If a school or an agency believes that an individual may not be the right person for the volunteer opening, it is acceptable to simply inform the individual that there is not an appropriate opening available to meet their needs. Individual schools may raise particular concerns. For example, one pilot school has asked its county social services department to screen potential volunteers through the Child Abuse Registry because that was a concern raised in that school.

- ***What if the issue of confidentiality arises?*** Because the senior volunteers spend time with individual and small groups of children, a child may tell a senior volunteer information that is private or may be reportable. Schools and agencies can avoid problems by providing guidance for what information must be reported to the teacher or to another school official. Generally, this would be information that would be considered reportable by the school. In some cases, the child may share information that would be simply helpful for the teacher to know. For example, a pet may have

died or a close relative may be in the hospital. A child may be tired because a new baby is in the house. At the same time, it is important for the teacher and the senior volunteer to understand that the senior is participating as part of the classroom team, and respect that relationship as personal within the classroom. By maintaining trust and respect, the relationship in the classroom can grow.

- ***What if the senior volunteer becomes ill?*** One of the wonderful things about intergenerational programs is that students who come in contact with older persons gain a respect of the life experiences and friendship a senior volunteer shares. Research demonstrates that children who have relationships with older persons see them as active, healthy adults. Occasionally a senior may be unable to return to the school because of health or illness. Schools that have become involved in intergenerational programs recommend that school support personnel be included in the planning process so that children and the classroom can be supported if a relationship is ended due to illness or, in rare instances, death. Through the intergenerational program, children will gain a better understanding of the cycle of life.

Where can I get more information?

This manual was designed to assist schools and agencies serving older persons in initiating intergenerational programs. Within New York State, County Offices for the Aging are readily available to assist schools begin the process of initiating intergenerational programs. Many counties also have RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) offices and Foster Grandparent programs that work with the county agency, and may have responsibility for initiating programs and services. Agencies can also provide a listing of senior housing facilities in the community. Outside of New York City, Boards of Cooperative Education (BOCES) have played a special role in helping school districts initiate partnerships with community and public agencies. County offices are listed in the local telephone book.

In addition, several schools in New York State have begun to initiate intergenerational programs and have offered to provide information and assistance to schools or agencies/facilities serving older persons. A listing of those programs is provided in the manual. To provide further assistance, several resources have been helpful in the formulation of this pilot project as well as in the compilation of this manual. Each of those documents is listed for the reader's convenience.

For schools or agencies seeking to develop or enhance intergenerational programs, one program participant has said it all: "There are no strangers here, only intergenerational friends working together to share the love of learning." There are many opportunities to bring generations together to share that experience. Begin today to explore possibilities in your own community.

A Spotlight on Promising Practices

Thank you to the following programs, especially mentor programs (♥) that helped guide us in this pilot project, and to emerging programs (♥♥) that participated in the pilot project, for sharing a brief profile of their experiences in developing intergenerational programs in New York State schools. Contact names are included for your information.

Promising Practices

Intergenerational Programs for Improving Student Achievement

♥Albany County (Guilderland Central School District)

Residents at the Beverwyck Retirement Community and students at the Westmere Elementary School joined together in a creative experience that has been successful, educational and rewarding for all. Third graders, in the midst of an intergenerational study, read literature in which "mature adults" were featured. The third graders participated in an "interview technique" and were joined by three Beverwyck residents as reading partners and subjects for interviews. Fourth grade students helped the older persons conquer their fears about computers. Fifth grade students visited the Beverwyck after an extensive study on famous Americans. The children, dressed in period clothing, enthralled the elders with a parade of the past. Students have participated in a "Readers Roundtable" to share their writing with the seniors. Second graders participated with a senior volunteer in a weekly workshop entitled "Let's Pretend". ***The contact person for this program is Lynne Haley at the Guiderland Central School at (518) 456-3771.***

Farnsworth Middle School students share their cyberspace skills with seniors from Guilderland Senior Services in a five-week program designed to assist seniors gain computer skills. Held in the fall and spring, this two year old program provides students with an intergenerational opportunity to work with seniors on computer skills, based on the senior's individual interests and needs. Fourteen seniors and students join together after-school for one day a week to explore the basics of computer word processing, CD-ROM access, Internet use, and computer paint programs. The sessions offer students an opportunity to share their skills and talents in a positive intergenerational relationship. ***The contact person for this program is Peggy Glenn at the Guilderland Senior Services at (518) 356-1980.***

♥Albany County (Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk Central School District)

Students in the Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk CSD join together with their S.T.A.R.S. (Seniors Teaching and Reaching Out to Students) in an intergenerational program that involves the community's young and old sharing experiences that develop mutual trust, learning and understanding. S.T.A.R.S. work in classrooms under the direct supervision of a teacher and receive a daily written mentoring assignment. As tutors working to reinforce basic skills, as role models demonstrating unique interests or hobbies, as confidants to help young people solve personal problems, or as initiators of special enrichment services, 15 active S.T.A.R.S. motivate students to become enthusiastic learners. This intergenerational program, formed in 1995-96, has received both national and state recognition for its achievements. S.T.A.R.S. are provided an hourly stipend, breakfast or lunch, and access to community support services from the program, while at the same time, helping high need students experience success. ***The contact person for this program is Judy Glassanos at the R-C-S S.T.A.R.S. Program at (518) 767-9152.***

♥Cattaraugus County (Gowanda Central School District)

Students at the Aldrich Street Elementary School benefit from the "Work for Hugs" Volunteer Program. Senior citizens and grandparents join other community members to assist with in-class activities, such as reading to children, listening to stories, enriching theme projects, or helping with computers, in addition to out-of-classroom activities such as the breakfast program or organizing supplies. Volunteers also work at home to organize book orders, make note pads, assemble

books, laminate items, or prepare for special activities such as book fairs. McDonald's is a community partner in the "Work for Hugs" program by offering food coupons in appreciation of the many hours that volunteers participate at the school. The combination of in-class, out-of-class, and at-home activities offers a wide range of support for senior citizens and other community members to support student success in school. ***The contact person for this program is Janice Stokes at the Gowanda Central School District at (716) 532-3325.***

Cattaraugus County (Olean Central School District)

Eighteen seniors and eighteen sixth graders learn how to communicate and bond with each other while working in teams to beautify or clean one of Olean's ten city parks, in the fall and the spring. The Olean Middle School's Home and Career Skills Department and the Olean Senior Center, in collaboration with Olean Parks and Recreation initiated *Adopt-a-Park*. The student participants have an opportunity to experience positive work habits, learn how to accept responsibility for doing a good job while at the same time, learn from their new senior buddy the value of determination and commitment. The fellowship fostered by their intergenerational exchange readily dispels any stereotype that each generation has about one another. Students age from eleven to thirteen, while the seniors range in age from sixty to over eighty. ***The contact person for this program is Kathleen Hamed at the Olean Senior Citizen's Center at (716) 376-5670.***

♥ ♥ Chautauqua County (Cassadaga Valley Central School District)

The Cassadaga Elementary School started planning for its intergenerational reading program in the spring of 1999. The school began distributing program flyers to potential senior volunteers in the community to inform them of opportunities to work with children in the school. The program was designed to help children in grades K-5 strengthen their reading and writing skills. Senior volunteers would also help the students study and learn facts that help them do better in the classroom. The initial request for volunteers resulted in six individuals who indicated that they would participate in the program. An orientation session was held in September 1999 for the volunteers and the school hopes to attract additional seniors during the fall. The school is also exploring the feasibility of starting a pen pal program during the school year in which students would correspond with seniors who are residing in local retirement homes. The Erie II BOCES participated in the development of this program. ***The contact person for this program is Roberta Traks (or Trish Pecuch) at the Cassadaga Elementary School at (716) 595-3070.***

♥ ♥ Chemung County (Elmira City and Horseheads Central School Districts)

The Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Chemung County, and the Chemung County Office for the Aging have collaborated on development of an intergenerational reading program starting in the fall of 1999. Four schools in the Elmira City School District and the Horseheads Central School District will have 15 new senior volunteers who will work closely with teachers to develop reading plans for students in grades K through 3. A full-day orientation and training session was held in late summer to acquaint both teachers and senior volunteers to the potential benefits of the new program, as well as ways they could work together to help improve the reading skills of participating children. A Reading Resource Trainer provided an overview of the types of activities that can be used to help young children strengthen their reading skills. The training session included time for individual teachers and senior volunteers to meet each other, and discuss plans for their activities in the classroom. ***The contact person for this program is Carol Lincoln at the RSVP of Chemung County at (607) 734-4161.***

♥Clinton County (Plattsburgh City School District)

Young children in kindergarten through second grade enjoy the company of eight senior "Reading Buddies" on a weekly basis at the Bailey Avenue School. The seniors, recruited by the local Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) are assigned to specific classrooms for about an hour. Teachers and the seniors create opportunities that will work best in individual classrooms, with some seniors generally working with students one-to-one, or in some cases, in small groups. Students are selected by the teachers to participate because they have low reading skills, will benefit from the one-to-one attention, or need reading partners for the Reading Incentive Program. In some classes, every student participated. Teachers report that students not only make progress in reading, but also develop a greater interest in reading and increased self-confidence. The fact that these volunteers are seniors seems to add something special to the relationship. The program celebrated the end of this year with all students receiving a summer reading gift from the Reading Buddies. Both school and the RSVP staff look forward to an expansion of the program in the coming year. Beekmantown, Northeastern Clinton, and Saranac Central School Districts, as well as St. Mary's Academy in Champlain are also exploring "Reading Buddies". ***The contact person for this program is Sandy Sexton at the Clinton County RSVP at (518) 566-0944.***

♥♥Essex County (Willsboro Central School District)

The Willsboro Central School District and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Essex County held an orientation session in early September 1999 to initiate its Generations Together Intergenerational Reading Program. Thirteen senior volunteers recruited by the RSVP joined together with the district's ten elementary school teachers to get acquainted and discuss ideas for working together in the classrooms. Needs assessment surveys were completed by both teachers and senior volunteers to determine their preferences for working with students. The senior volunteers and the teachers arranged pre-program meetings to develop schedules and arrangements for beginning the program in October. In addition to the Willsboro School District and the RSVP, the AmeriCorps of Essex County, the Essex County Office for the Aging, The Essex County Department of Social Services, the Essex County Youth Bureau and the Clinton-Essex-Warren-Washington BOCES participated in the planning for the program. ***The contact person for this program is Patsy McCaughin at the RSVP of Essex County at (518) 546-3565.***

Essex County (Minerva Central School District)

First graders in the Minerva Central School participate in a one-day a week, thirty-minute program that includes one senior volunteer from the community. This senior community member volunteers her time to sit and listen to young emergent readers. The program takes place in the first grade classroom immediately following the breakfast program. The children look forward to this special time. There are no costs to the district for this service. The district is looking forward to recruiting additional senior volunteers in the future. ***The contact person for this program is Ann Yaeger at the Minerva Central School District at (518) 251-2000.***

Fulton County (Gloversville City School District)

The *Special Friends* Program brings together high school students and seniors in an opportunity to share experiences, skills and talents. Participating students from Gloversville High School are paired with senior community members with common interests from the Senior Citizen Service Center of Gloversville and Fulton County, and the relationships build from there. For example, a student majoring in French is paired with a senior volunteer who was born in Belgium. An art student

may be paired with a senior whose former occupation was a graphics artist. This intergenerational program has broken many barriers and dispelled myths associated with both senior citizens as well as teenagers. Approximately 60 students and seniors participate in new relationships through this program annually. The budget for this program is approximately $1500 to cover all costs. ***The contact person for this program is Dorothy MacVean at the Senior Citizen Service Center of Gloversville and Fulton County, Inc. at (518) 725-0923.***

Greene County (St. Patrick's Academy)

Young students enrolled in St. Patrick's Academy are guided to improve their reading skills. The Greene County Department for the Aging and St. Patrick's Academy in Catskill have joined together to assist 15 second and third graders who were reading below grade level or were having difficulty in keeping up with the class as the academic year progressed. Seven RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) volunteers contributed 138 hours of volunteer service in four classrooms during the 1997-98 school year. The volunteers or "Guiding Angels" participate in a specific program one-day a week and work either one-on-one with a student or in a small group setting with selected students who need assistance. St. Patrick's reported that 80% of the students (12 of 15) enrolled in the program were reading at grade level at the end of the school year. Guiding Angels have expanded their role to include first graders in the 1998-99 school year. ***The contact person for this program is Barbara Cornelius-Promo at the Greene County Department for the Aging at (518) 943-5332.***

Livingston County (Livonia Central School District)

Young students in the Livonia Primary School participate in the Foster Grandparent Program, with the inclusion of four foster grandparents in grades kindergarten through third grade. Each foster grandparent works twenty hours a week in the classroom. Both individual students and small groups of students benefit from individual tutoring and the friendship of an older person. The grandparents are assigned to individual classrooms. In particular, students with special needs receive services through this program, both in a special education classroom and within individual classrooms. The school provides lunches and physicals for each foster grandparent, at a cost of $700 annually for each grandparent. The partner agency for this program is the Livingston County Office for the Aging. ***The contact person for this program is Christopher Lynch at the Livonia Central School District at (716) 346-4020.***

Nassau County (Westbury Union Free School District)

Powells Lane Elementary and Westbury Middle School students and seniors from Senior Citizens of Westbury Center join together in a unique Telementoring Project. The program has two phases. Phase 1 is a face-to-face tutorial implemented in fifth grade for students having average academic abilities. The focus of the tutoring is to enhance student research and writing skills. Phase II is a "telementoring" program that commences in sixth grade, continuing the support and guidance transitioning to the middle school years. Communication is through the Internet using an Internet Relay Chat (IRC) program. This program enables conversations (typing) in real time over the Internet. It also allows students and their mentors to "visit" Web sites and look at information simultaneously. The goal of the program is to develop intergenerational learning communities between senior citizens and students and draw on the strengths of telecommunication technology during a time of educational transition. ***The contact person for this program is Yetta Waldman at Senior Citizens of Westbury Center at (516) 334-5560.***

Oneida County (Sauquoit Valley Central School District)

Sauquoit Valley Elementary School fourth graders enjoy participation in a pen pal program be-

tween the Sauquoit Valley Senior Citizens and their classroom. The year begins with the exchange of letters, followed by monthly classroom projects and more letters to each other. At Christmas, the students are invited to a luncheon at the senior site, and gifts are exchanged. In the spring, the seniors are invited to the school to enjoy a breakfast or a play and refreshments hosted by the fourth grade students. These nine and ten year olds explore computers, local history, reading and writing. Local history is gathered through interviews. Twenty students and twenty seniors participate in this low cost program. ***The contact person for this program is Barbara Comstock at the Sauquoit Valley Central School at (315) 839-6339.***

Onondaga (Fayetteville-Manlius Central School District)

The O.W.L.S. (Older, Wiser, Leading Students) program provides seniors as intergenerational role models to enrich Fayetteville Elementary School students' education while providing an opportunity for seniors to share their rich wealth of experience. The program grows with popularity each year. Seniors now assist teachers in correcting papers; reading on a one-to-one level or in a small group setting; assisting with arithmetic and spelling; sharing travel experiences; acting as mentors to children with problems; and adapting themselves to each specific teacher's needs. Questionnaires are distributed yearly to both the senior volunteers and the teachers involved with the program welcoming suggestions and comments on improving the program. The lives of both students and seniors have been enriched through their ongoing interaction. ***The contact person for this program is Heidi Taylor at Manlius Senior Center at (315) 682-7889.***

Orange County (Pine Bush Central School District)

The Pine Bush Central School District promotes the spirit of volunteerism between the school and the community through an Adopt-A-Grandparent Program. The lives of both the young and the elderly are enhanced through the sharing of life experiences, the development of companionships and a greater understanding of each generation. This after school program is where students visit their "grandparent" in a nursing home facility. Students create their own schedule for visiting one hour per week (or more if they choose). Academic areas of interest include social studies, English, reading, writing, music or art. The participating students range from ages 14 to 18. Ten to fifteen students during the school year visit twenty older persons at the Park Manor Health Care Facility. ***The contact person for this program is Janet Formisano at the Pine Bush Central School District at (914) 744-2031, Ext. 3600.***

Orleans-Niagara BOCES (Niagara Falls City School District, North Tonawanda City Schools and Lewiston-Porter Central School District)

The summer provides a unique opportunity for 400 students from three school districts to participate in an intensive K-5 Literacy Skills Program sponsored by the Orleans/Niagara BOCES. For twenty-four days, these students attend school from 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. to concentrate on reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. A certified teacher, an aide, and a foster grandparent staff each classroom of approximately 15 students. Fifteen to eighteen foster grandparents participate in the program, providing students with an opportunity to benefit from the experience of older persons. The estimated cost of this intensive program is $70,000 or $175 per student. Costs include teacher and aide salaries, books and materials, and other costs associated with the program. ***The contact person for this program is Dr. Douglas David at the Orleans-Niagara BOCES at (716) 439-4334.***

Queens (Community School District #28)

In March 1997, the Forest Hills Senior Center and the Forest Hills High School began a new intergenerational collaborative to provide senior immigrants with tutoring on American history to help them pass the U.S. citizenship exam. A group of students from Forest Hills High School U.S. Government class come once a week to the center to work with Russian-speaking seniors. The benefits from this intergenerational contact have reached far beyond the actual tutoring. It has provided an opportunity not only to increase citizenship skills but to also expand intergenerational understanding. Students have been proud of the reputation they have achieved in the community by helping seniors to prepare for their exam. ***The contact person for this program is Irina Sarktisova at the Forest Hills Senior Center at (718) 699-1010.***

♥Schenectady County (Rotterdam-Mohonasen Central School District)

Second grade students at the Pinewood Elementary School participate in the successful "Pages Between the Ages" program. Residents and seven and eight year old students become pen pals, exchanging letters in a notebook each week. The notebooks are the inexpensive black and white composition notebooks known to all of us. Pictures of "Pals" decorate the cover of each book which highlights "Friendship is Forever". Letters are transported back and forth by teachers or by the activities director at Kingsway Arms. Students write about family members, pets, vacations, or friends. They question residents about family and friends and about events in their lives. The program has grown to include interactive activities, such as a Tea Party at school or a Share and Tell Program. Students bring an item from home to show off, and residents bring an old item from their childhood to explain. This program not only fosters intergenerational friendships but also helps children build their English Language Arts skills in writing and reading. ***The contact person for this program is Nancy Fedele at Parkland Garden Apartments at Kingsway Arms at (518) 393-9551.***

Ulster County (Marlboro Central School District)

Operation Read is a one-to-one tutoring program that brings adult tutors, including a senior volunteer, and six first graders together for one-half hour per week. The program is held in the library during school hours and is intended to improve student reading comprehension and enjoyment. The focus of the program is on reading and writing. Community businesses and organizations provide $700 for reading materials and supplies. This is a new program. Student progress is being tracked and the district plans to expand the program as more tutors become available. ***The contact person for this program is Gale Aidala at the Marlboro Central Schools at (914) 565-9620.***

♥♥Ulster County (Highland Central School District)

The Highland Elementary School and the Wingate at Ulster are collaborating on the development of a pen pal program between students in the school and senior volunteers from Wingate. The partners agreed that the program should start small at the outset with the potential for expansion as the initial details are worked out in practice. The school is seeking to provide real-life experiences for students to enhance their writing and reading. The intent is to help students develop and increase their skills through writing for a purpose in a one-on-one relationship with a senior volunteer. The senior volunteers would establish a specific time in the week as a part of their activity schedule when they would correspond with the students in the school. The program was pilot tested during the summer with implementation slated to begin in the fall. The Ulster County BOCES participated in the planning for this program. ***The contact person for this program is William Hecht at the Highland Elementary School at (914) 691-7211.***

♥Ulster County (Rondout Valley Central School District)

For the past several years, seniors in the Ulster County Retired and Senior Volunteer Program have been in a pen pal program with three fourth grade classes in the Rosendale Elementary School. This intergenerational activity has proven to be rewarding to both the seniors and the students. The teachers use the program to teach how to write a casual letter, how to ask questions to become familiar with someone else and to answer questions about themselves. Both the students and the seniors enjoy the interaction. They look forward to their picnic at the end of the school year. Many maintain their letter writing after the school year ends. Since the seniors can write their pen pal anywhere, anytime, in any mode, this program involves many seniors who are homebound or do not usually have contact with children. It enhances both age groups by providing an opportunity to bridge the age gap and to share their histories and lives with each other. ***The contact person for this program is Catherine Canzian at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program at the Ulster County Community College at (914) 687-5274.***

♥♥Ulster County (Onteora Central School District)

The Onteora Central School District and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (sponsored by the Ulster County Community College) are developing a Generations Together: Reading for the Future project for children in the district. Six senior volunteers recruited by the RSVP joined together with six teachers from the Bennett and the West Hurley Elementary Schools for a three-hour orientation and training session in the spring. The training session provided useful information to the senior volunteers about how they could make a difference in children's lives. Topics included how to work with children, an overview of literacy needs of children, and talking with teachers about the needs of students. The program is slated to begin in the fall with a primary focus on reading with children in the early elementary grades. The Ulster County BOCES participated in the planning of this initiative. ***The contact person for this program is Catherine Canzian at the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program at the Ulster County Community College at (914) 687-5274.***

A Spotlight on Program Materials

Thank you to the participating mentor and emerging programs for sharing program materials for use in this manual. These materials will help interested programs in developing similar materials for their own programs and may be used as models for development.

The R-C-S S.T.A.R.S. Program Goals

Ravena-Coeymans-Selkirk—Seniors Teaching And Reaching Out to Students (S.T.A.R.S.)*

For Senior Citizen S.T.A.R.S.

- **Continued involvement in the community.**
- **The development of new mutually beneficial relationships with the community's youth and school district professionals.**
- **Providing opportunities for lifelong learning and increased knowledge.**
- **Providing opportunities to transfer knowledge, skill, wisdom, cultural and community history to the youth of the community.**
- **Providing opportunities for senior citizen S.T.A.R.S. to obtain training and knowledge that fosters a better understanding of the challenges that face the youth of today.**
- **Increased life satisfaction and self-esteem.**
- **Providing the opportunity for senior citizen S.T.A.R.S. to obtain a free breakfast and lunch in school to decrease nutritional risk factors.**
- **Giving senior citizens information about programs and services that are available to them in their community, county, state and nation.**
- **Offering $5.00 an hour for time spent mentoring and tutoring students.**

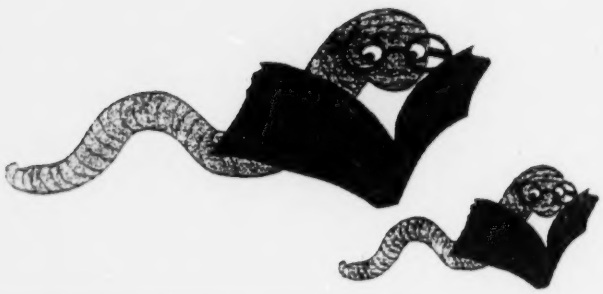
For Students, Children and Youth

- **Increased knowledge, learning and skills.**
- **Increased motivation to learn by having one-on-one senior citizen mentors and tutors in the classroom.**
- **The development of new mutually beneficial relationships with senior citizens of the community.**
- **Increased life satisfaction and self esteem.**
- **Providing opportunities to gain a positive understanding of aging and the senior citizen.**
- **Increased awareness of careers, civic involvement, and positive recognition of the values of community service.**

For Teachers and School District Professionals

- **Support in the realization of the goals of teachers and the school district.**
- **Increased involvement and community support for teachers working in the classroom.**
- **Increased involvement and community support for school district goals.**
- **Increased understanding of aging and the positive impact that senior citizens can have when given the opportunity to become involved in mutually beneficial intergenerational school and community programs.**
- **Developing new mutually beneficial relationships with senior citizens from the community.**

* *The R-C-S—S.T.A.R.S. program is a recipient of national, state and local awards.*



Generations Together:

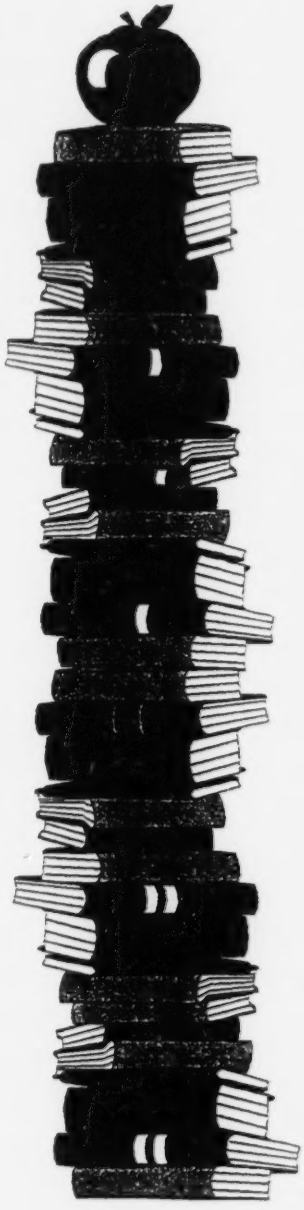
Reading for the Future

(A Rural Education Advisory Committee Initiative)

Wanted: Senior Volunteers

to help in

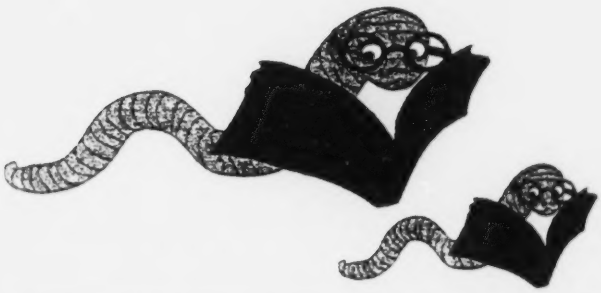
- Cassadaga Elementary School.
- PreK-5th grade classrooms available.
- We need your help.
- Listen to us read.
- Help us read and write stories.
- Help us study and learn facts.
- Be our special friends.



Interested?

For more information, call
Cassadaga Elementary School
Roberta Traks or Trish Pecuch
595-3070

An orientation will be held
in September 1999
for volunteer opportunities during the
1999-2000 school year!



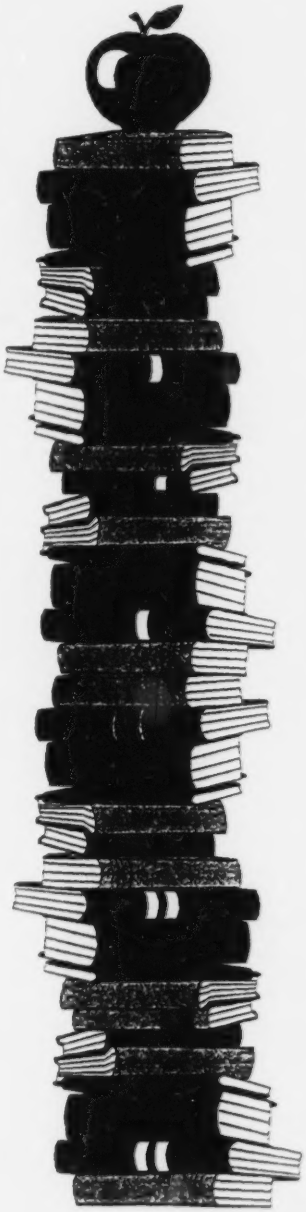
Generations Together:

Reading for the Future

(A Rural Education Advisory Committee Initiative)

Wanted: Classroom Teachers

- Onteora Schools
- Grades Kindergarten to 2
- Invite Senior Volunteers to join you in your classroom
- To help children read
- To read to children
- To listen to children tell stories
- To help children write
- and other ideas you may have.



Interested? Join Us!

Orientation for Classroom Teachers
Olive Library
April 21, 1999
2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
(Meet senior volunteers at a 2:00 p.m. social.)

Let your principal know if you are interested!

Brought to you by the Ulster BOCES, Onteora Schools and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (sponsored by Ulster County Community College)
Orientation Provided by EPIC (Every Person Influences Children)

Intergenerational Reading Program

(Workshop Design for Participating Teachers, Senior Volunteers, and Administrators)

TIME	TASK/ACTIVITY
8:00 a.m.	Meeting and Greeting (Registration/Continental Breakfast)
8:30 a.m.	Purpose of Meeting (Bringing Together Teachers, Senior Volunteers, Administrators)
8:35 a.m.	Ice-breaker and Introductions (Activity Designed to Encourage People to Mingle, Get to Know One Another)
9:30 a.m.	Understanding of Aging (Interactive Vignettes by the RSVP Role Players)
10:00 a.m.	Building Relationships Between Teachers, Senior Volunteers, and Students.
10:30 a.m.	Break for Networking.
10:45 a.m.	Reading Strategies (Understanding Reading, Its Purpose, and Strategies for Enhancing Reading Skills)
Noon	Lunch and Networking
12:45 p.m.	Practice Regarding Reading Strategies (Reinforcement of Theory into Practice)
2:00 p.m.	Break for Networking
2:15 p.m.	Discussion and Interaction by Principals, Teachers, and Senior Volunteers by Site
2:45 p.m.	Community Meeting (Participants Have an Opportunity to Discuss What They Liked/Disliked; Were Surprised About; or Something New They Learned)

A Collaborative Initiative by the Schuyler-Chemung-Tioga BOCES., Elmira City School District, Horseheads Central School District, Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Chemung County, Chemung County Office for the Aging, EPIC (Every Person Influences Children), and Sullivan Educational Associates

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Essex County
14 Park Place
Port Henry, NY 12974-1324
(518) 546-3565
Fax # (518) 546-3342

And

Volunteer Station:	Willsboro Central School District
Address:	Willsboro, NY 12996
Telephone #: 963-4456	**Fax #:** 963-7577

It is agreed that the attached basic provisions will guide our working relationship and that:

The RSVP representative who will serve as liaison with the volunteer station is: the RSVP Director or the RSVP Program Assistant

The volunteer station representative who will serve as liaison with RSVP and who will be responsible for volunteer orientation and supervision is: Wanda McQueen

This Memorandum of Understanding (M.O.U.) may be amended, in writing, at any time with concurrence of both parties. It will be reviewed every three (3) years to permit needed changes, or at the request of either party at any time.

(For RSVP)	(For the Volunteer Station)
Name_____	Name_____
Signature_____	Signature_____
Date_____	Date_____

Basic Provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding:

A. The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program will:

1. Recruit, interview, and enroll RSVP volunteers and refer volunteers to the station.
2. Provide orientation to volunteer staff prior to placement of volunteers, and at other times, as needed.
3. Refer volunteers to volunteer station for assignments, and review acceptability of volunteer assignments.
4. Furnish excess accident, personal liability, and automobile liability insurance coverage as required by program policy.
5. In cooperation with the RSVP Advisory Council, arrange for an appeals procedure to address problems arising between the volunteer, the volunteer station, and/or RSVP.
6. Provide or arrange with volunteer station for transportation for volunteers to and from their assignments.
7. Arrange with volunteer station for meals, when possible, for volunteers on assignment.
8. Monitor volunteer activities at volunteer station periodically to assess and/or discuss needs of volunteers and volunteer station.

B. The Volunteer Station will (provide if possible):

1. Make final decision on assignment of volunteers.
2. Implement orientation, in-service instruction or special training of volunteers.
3. Provide for adequate safety of volunteers and a handicapped work place.
4. Collect and validate appropriate volunteer reports for submission to RSVP.
5. Furnish volunteers with any materials, or transportation required for assignments.
6. Investigate and report accidents and injuries involving volunteers to RSVP.
7. Discuss assignments with individual volunteers referred by RSVP and provide written assignments to volunteers, with a copy to RSVP.
8. Provide supervision of volunteers on assignments.
9. Supply financial vouchers to RSVP to verify non-federal support when lunches or transportation have been provided to volunteers.
10. Validate monthly volunteer reports submitted by volunteers to verify hours of volunteer service. Provide log sheets at work site for volunteers to sign in and out.

C. Other Provisions

1. **Separation from Volunteer Service**
The volunteer station may request the removal of a senior volunteer at any time. The RSVP volunteer may withdraw from service at the volunteer station or from the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program at any time. Discussion of individual separations will occur between RSVP staff, volunteer station staff, and the volunteer to clarify the reasons, resolve conflicts, or take remedial action, including placement with another volunteer station.

IN ADDITION, THE PARTIES HERETO AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING METHODS OF OPERATION OR ARRANGEMENTS FOR COOPERATION:

Willsboro Central School is a Volunteer Station for RSVP.
Volunteers will be working in the elementary grades as "School Buddies".
Volunteer assignments to include: help with reading, math, and writing; computer assistance; participating in a school-wide project researching local history with students as grandparent figures with one-to-one assistance.

Contact Person:_____

Renewal Date:_____

"Pages Between the Ages" Pen Pal Program

Parkland Garden Apartments at Kingsway Arms Sample Letters (Names Changed)

Dear Jack,

Thank you for coming to our class the other day. We had a real good time. It is real nice that you and me can be pen pals. We miss you a lot. We hope that you can come back to our class again. We all liked you. I hope you write back.

Love, Don

Dear Don,

I am glad to be your pen pal. I'm afraid I will not be able to come to your class. I am confined to a wheelchair and it is hard to get around. I used to teach school in a one-room school near Rochester NY a long time ago. Do you have any pets? I am fond of animals as I was brought up on a farm. Please write again.

Jack

Dear Jack,

I read your letter. It was real nice. I do have pets. I have two nice dogs, Pepper and Patches. I am in Cub Scouts. I am a bear in den ten. I would like to teach science when I am all grown up. Well, I'm sorry that you can't come back. Anyway thank you for writing back to me. It was real nice that you could. I wish I could get to know you a little.

Love, Don

Dear Don,

I was glad to hear you are a Cub Scout. I was a Cub Scout leader when my three sons were Cub Scouts and a Boy Scout leader as they grew older. The heart you drew made me think of Valentine's Day. I was 90 years old on Valentine's Day.

My oldest son was a science major in college. He went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Give your dogs a pat on the back for me.

Jack

Dear Jack,

I think you are a very nice man. I would like to meet you one day in person. It sounds like you have a real nice family. I will give my dog a pat on the back. I love her so much. I forgot to tell you that we gave the other dog Pepper away. It was real nice writing to you again. Please write back, Jack.

Love, Don

A Spotlight on Orientation Materials

Thank you to the Elmira City Schools and to E.P.I.C. (Every Person Influences Children) for developing orientation materials used during this project. A sample of those materials follow. Some materials are useful for both senior volunteers and teachers. Others may stimulate discussion among senior volunteers or teachers.

School districts interested in training may contact EPIC at (914) 941-1302.

What Are Intergenerational Programs?

Intergenerational programs link older persons or senior volunteers with students to share common experiences and the love of learning. The benefits for everyone involved in intergenerational programs in school are many.

For Students

- ♥ Improved academic performance
- ♥ Connections to older persons
- ♥ Understanding of aging
- ♥ Building on the resources of youth

For Senior Volunteers

- ♥ Sharing life experiences, skills and talents
- ♥ Connections to a younger generation
- ♥ Building friendships for years to come
- ♥ Helping others learn

For Teachers

- ♥ Enriching education by added resources
- ♥ Expanding opportunities for students
- ♥ Helping individual children succeed
- ♥ Improved student behavior

For the Community

- ♥ Supportive community for education
- ♥ Service to each other as a model
- ♥ Spirit of community

Benefits of Intergenerational Programs
A Teacher's Perspective

- **Improving academic performance**
  Students who are involved in intergenerational programs attend class more regularly, complete their assignments more often and are enriched with different perspectives.

- **Involving youth in learning**
  Chance to help youth to see benefits of older adults on a personal basis; opportunities to learn about aging and develop positive personal values for their own aging process.

- **Improving student behavior**
  The traditional values demonstrated by many older adults provide an anchor to the tentative values of students. Their presence can have a calming effect on students.

- **Enriching education and revitalizing teachers**
  Teachers have limited time and resources; older adults can bring new energies and experiences to subjects for teachers and students.

Adapted from Illinois Intergenerational Initiative

What is Literacy?

New York State has developed four learning standards for reading, writing, listening, and speaking:

Standard 1

- Students will read, write, listen and speak for information and understanding.

Standard 2

- Students will read, write, listen and speak for literary response and expression.

Standard 3

- Students will read, write, listen and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

Standard 4

- Students will read, write, listen and speak for social interaction.

Listening-Speaking-Reading-Writing

As children learn to listen,
they are learning to speak;

As children learn to speak,
they are learning to read;

As children learn to read,
they are learning to write;

As children learn to write,
they are learning to think;

As children learn to think,
they are learning to listen.

Bill Martin, Jr.

As a Reading Volunteer, You Can:

- Model good reading behavior.
- Provide opportunities for children to read.
- Develop the love of books.
- Inspire children to read and write.
- Help children to develop confidence.
- Help children to make connections between what they read and their own lives.
- Provide opportunities for children to have one-to-one literacy experiences with a caring adult.
- Give children opportunities to talk.

Children Who Have Achieved Well in Reading Have Learned:

- Reading and writing are enjoyable tasks.
- Print is used in many ways.
- Stories have a structure.
- We can think about what we have read and ask questions.
- We can hear the individual sounds in words.

Principles of Communicating with the Classroom Teacher

- Share both positive accomplishments and problems or issues.
- Share the comments by the time you leave.
- Ask the teacher for the best time that day to speak with them.
- Be as brief as possible.
- If you can't speak with them, leave a note.
- Some teachers and volunteers have developed a journal to share notes with each other.

Talking with Children

Children might want to talk about:

- Their favorite friends
- What they like to do after school
- Their favorite outdoor activity
- Their favorite songs or groups
- The kinds of things they like to eat
- A movie they saw recently
- Someone they helped
- Their hobbies

What you could share about you:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Responding to a Child Who Shares a Problem Situation

- Above all else, just listen; minimize interruptions.
- Make eye contact to show you are interested.
- Ask a question if you are confused about what the child has told you.
- Ask "What do you do when that happens?" or "What's that like for you when...?"
- Ask "Have you talked to anybody about this?"
- Consider talking with the teacher.

A Spotlight on Selected Resources

There are many resources available in print, in media format and on the Internet to guide the development of intergenerational programs. Following is a listing of selected resources that can support the reader in learning more about intergenerational programs and assisting young children to learn to read.

Selected Resources

American Association of Retired Persons. (1989). *Becoming a School Partner: A Guide for Older Volunteers.* Washington, D.C.

American Association of Retired Persons. (1992, 1996). *Becoming a School Partner: A Guidebook for Organizing Intergenerational Partnerships in Schools.* Washington, D.C. (In collaboration with the National Association of Partners in Education).

American Association of Retired Persons. (1997, 1998). *Teaching About Aging: Enriching Lives Across the Life Span.* Washington, D.C. (In collaboration with the National Academy for Teaching and Learning About Aging).

Barrow, Georgia M. (1992). *Aging, the Individual, and Society.* West Publishing Company. St. Paul, Minnesota.

Brabazon, Kevin and Disch, Robert, Editors. (1997). *Intergenerational Approaches in Aging: Implications for Education, Policy and Practice.* New York/London. The Haworth Press, Inc.

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement. (1998). *Every Child a Reader.* Ann Arbor, Michigan. (www.ciera.org).

Center for Intergenerational Learning. (n.d.). *What Are Intergenerational Programs and Why Create Them?* Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Temple University. (www.temple.edu/CIL).

FoodWorks. (1998). *Getting to Know You: Connecting Students to the Wisdom of the Elders.* Peachum Schools, Massachusetts. (Video Format).

Illinois Intergenerational Initiative. (1996). *Generations Working Together (The Benefits of Intergenerational Connections, Introducing Intergenerational Experiences in Schools, Recruiting and Linking Older Adults and Students, Enriching the Curriculum, Communication between Generations, Celebrate the Event).* Carbondale, Illinois. (www.siu.edu/offices/iii).

Learning First Alliance. (1998, 1999). *Every Child Reading: An Action Plan.* Washington, D.C. A Learning First Alliance Action Paper. (www.learningfirst.org).

National Association of Elementary School Principals. (1998). *Best Ideas for Reading from America's Blue Ribbon Schools: What Do Award Wining Elementary and Middle School Principals Do?* United States. Corwin Press. (www.corwinpress.com).

National Education Commission on Time and Learning. (1994, September). *Prisoners of Time-Schools and Programs Making Time Work. Chapter 1:Elementary Schools, Sahaurita Elementary School (Retirement Community Volunteers and Technology).* Washington, D.C. (www.ed.gov.pubs/PrisonersofTime/index.html).

National Research Council. (1998). *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children.* National Academy Press. (www.nas.edu).

National Research Council. (1999). *Starting Out Right: A Guide to Promoting Children's Reading Success.* National Academy Press. (www.nas.edu).

National Service Resource Center. (1999, January). *Reading Helpers, Guide for Training Tutors.* Washington, D.C. (www.etr-associates.org/NRSC).

NAEYC & IRA. (1999). *Learning to Read and Write: Developmentally Appropriate Practices for Young Children.* A joint position statement of the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Washington, DC. NAEYC. (www.naeyc.org).

New York State Office for the Aging. (1999). *Senior Citizen Resource Guide: A Consumer's Guide to Information, Programs, and Services for New York State's Elderly.* Albany, New York. (http://aging.state.ny.us/nysofa).

Senior Partners in Education. (1998). *Letters Enhance Children's Lives, Education.* Family Literacy Center. Bloomington, Indiana. (nritter@indiana.edu).

U.S. Department of Education. (Various Dates). Available free by calling (877) 4ED-PUBS or through (www.ed.gov/pubs).

Checkpoints for Progress in Reading and Writing: For Families and Communities, and For Teachers and Learning Partners.
The Compact for Reading Guide and School-Home Links Kit.
Learning to Read, Reading to Learn Information Kit for Parents and Teachers (Children with Learning Disabilities).
*Read*Write*Now! Poster, Tip Sheet and Basic Kit.*
*Read*Write*Now! Tutoring Manual.*
*Ready*Set*Read Early Childhood Learning Kit.*
Simple Things You Can Do to Help All Children Read Well and Independently by the End of Third Grade.
Start Early, Finish Strong: How to Help Every Child Become a Reader.

Wasik, Barbara A. (1999, March). *Reading Coaches: An Alternative to Reading Tutors.* Teaching Reading: Vol. 52. No. 6. International Reading Association.

Legislative Commission on Rural Resources

The New York State Legislative Commission on Rural Resources is a joint, bi-partisan agency within the State Legislature. It began operation in 1983 with a mission to examine the impact of rural resources upon the State's economy; review the existing laws and regulations as they pertain to rural resources; assess the effectiveness of programs designed to promote rural viability; and make recommendations and sponsor legislation in the State Legislature to enhance and protect rural resources.

There are 44 rural counties defined through statute, and a number of rural towns in metropolitan counties, with a total population of 3.5 million. The Commission's scope of work encompasses all aspects of rural life within those counties. The Commission develops and introduces legislation, produces research reports, a newsletter, policy recommendations, background papers, and conducts public hearings and forums.

Senator Patricia K. McGee, Chair
Assemblywoman RoAnn M. Destito, Vice-Chair

Senate Members:	Mary Lou Rath	**Assembly Members:**	Jacob E. Gunther, III
	James W. Wright		Martin A. Luster
	Neil D. Breslin		James Bacalles
	William T. Stachowski		H. Robert Nortz

Rural Education Advisory Committee

The Rural Education Advisory Committee was established in 1990 as a result of legislation sponsored by the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources. Its primary mission is to identify and disseminate information on raising the aspirations and increasing opportunities for rural students, families, and communities through the pursuit of excellence and equity for rural students. It is a seven member committee that is chaired by the Commissioner of Education or designee. Its membership includes school administrators, government officials, parents and program operators.

Mr. Charles H. Bohlen, Jr., Chair

Ronald Dougherty	Ruth Henry	Michael Joseph, Jr.
Judith Duken	James G. Hill	George F. Mack

Advisors

Peter Applebee Mary Ann Awad Ronald C. Brach Suzanne Spear

For additional information, contact the Legislative Commission on Rural Resources at (518) 455-2544

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